



# FACT SHEET

## U.S. Air Force Fact Sheet

### Officer Training School

#### Mission

Develop today's leaders for tomorrow's Air Force.

#### Personnel and Resources

A staff of 114 active-duty members including 75 officers, 41 enlisted, and 9 civilian personnel make up Officer Training School (OTS). The organization has three squadrons that trained 1,651 students in FY06 (560 in Basic Officer Training and 1,090 in Commissioned Officer Training). Students include Air Force Active Duty, Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard members.



#### Organization

The Officer Training School mission is to train and commission quality officers for the United States Air Force. OTS was organized at Medina Annex, Lackland Air Force Base (AFB), Texas, in 1959. Its predecessor, the Officer Candidates School (OCS), was established in 1942 in Miami Beach, Florida, and its mission was to train and commission members from the enlisted ranks. OCS moved to Lackland AFB in the spring of 1944 and gained the additional mission of training officers directly from civilian status in September 1951. OCS closed its doors with its last graduation in June 1963.

The first OTS class was comprised of 89 trainees, including 11 women. Production numbers have varied over the years from 323 the first year to 7,894 in FY67. The school moved to Maxwell AFB, Alabama, in September 1993 as part of the Air Force Chief of Staff's vision to align all officer education/training programs under Air University.

#### Basic Officer Training

The purpose of Basic Officer Training is to train and commission second lieutenants in response to Active Duty Air Force and Air Force Reserve requirements, in partnership with the U.S. Air Force Academy and Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps, the other members of the Air Force officer production triad. BOT production numbers fluctuate in response to variations between projected and actual Air Force Academy and Air Force ROTC officer accessions, and Air Force end strength requirements.

The BOT program consists of 12 weeks of military instruction for college graduates leading to commissions as second lieutenants. The goal of this training is to instill high standards of conduct and provide officer candidates with the essential military knowledge and skills needed for effective performance.

To ensure OTS graduates have the knowledge and skills necessary to be effective Air Force junior officers, OTS staff members provide instruction and guidance in curriculum areas such as leadership studies, professional knowledge, communication skills, military studies and field leadership applications.

OTS presents these areas concurrently, emphasizing teambuilding, followership, and knowledge acquisition during the first half of training and leadership applications during the second half. Lectures, readings, guided discussions, classroom exercises, field leadership

exercises and after hours training activities combine to provide graduates with a broad and in-depth understanding of their role as commissioned officers in the U.S. Air Force.

OTS is, above all, a leadership laboratory. One of the highlights is the Leadership Reaction Course which is a field exercise using a specialized obstacle course where small groups of students practice handling stress in situations that test their ability to reason quickly and lead effectively. The program also features an "Air Expeditionary Force Exercise," a capstone field leadership assessment exercise, in which students demonstrate their ability to integrate and apply the communication and leadership skills learned throughout the course.

Officer Training School's motto is "Always With Honor," which is reflected by the students' honor code: "I will not lie, cheat, or steal, nor tolerate among us anyone who does." The code is a standard of personal conduct for each officer trainee. OTS expects each graduate to adopt the code as the minimum ethical standard to be maintained throughout their career.

### **Leadership Studies**

Trainees receive instruction on the fundamentals of leadership and team building; leadership styles, management principles, time management, goal setting, scientific problem solving, group dynamics, counseling skills, accountability, and ethics. Threaded throughout the course are lectures and exercises that introduce and reinforce the principles of officership, authority and responsibility of officers, the Honor Code, standards of conduct, and the Air Force Core Values.

### **Professional Knowledge**

This curriculum area emphasizes the skills and knowledge unique to commissioned service. Topics include dress and appearance, customs and courtesies, special and additional duties, military law, professional and unprofessional relationships, educational opportunities, pay and allowances, survivor and retirement benefits, officer evaluations and career progression, and such social actions issues as managing diversity, equal opportunity and treatment, sexual harassment/assault, and substance abuse.

### **Communication Skills**

Communication Skills classes are designed to develop the prospective officer's ability to speak more effectively, write more clearly and listen more efficiently. The communication curriculum includes communication skills foundations, writing for results, briefing techniques, and Air Force publications and staff work.

### **Military Studies and International Security Studies**

Every officer is expected and required to have a broad knowledge of the Air Force. Such knowledge includes origin and development, mission and purpose, doctrine, organization, position in the national military establishment, customs, and more.

This curriculum area is designed to provide students basic knowledge of Air Force history and heritage, the nature and laws of armed conflict, U.S. internal and foreign policies and national security issues, the organization and function of the Department of Defense and the Air Force, employment of aerospace forces, and strategic issues for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **Leadership Instruction and Application**

Each trainee is given the opportunity to apply leadership theory and techniques throughout the program. This area provides practical application in three areas: leadership training, military discipline, and physical conditioning. This is accomplished through field leadership activities, including the Air Expeditionary Force Exercise and others, teaching drill and ceremonies, uniform standards and military customs and courtesies classes. Physical fitness is assessed through a series of physical fitness tests. Trainees prepare for the tests by daily participation in organized fitness training.

### **Commissioning**

Once BOT trainees complete all OTS requirements they are administered the Oath of Office and commissioned (on extended active duty) as second lieutenants in the Air Force.

Most newly commissioned lieutenants will attend a technical school after Officer Training School. Technical training subject areas include flying, navigation, or air battle management; space and missile operations; and, several support career fields. The length of these schools varies according to the specialty.

### **Commissioned Officer Training**

Commissioned Officer Training (COT) is a four-and-a-half-week program that provides initial officership training for Air Force judge advocates, chaplains, medical officers (doctors, nurses, dentists, biomedical science corps officers, and hospital administrators), and medical scholarship recipients. COT is located on the OTS campus at Maxwell AFB.

The program began in September 1996 and combined three courses: Air Force Officer Orientation Course, Health Professions Officer Indoctrination Course, and Military Indoctrination for Medical Services Officers Course.

The COT training program covers the same subject areas as Basic Officer Training. However the curriculum is more compact than BOT due to the shorter length of the program.

Students are commissioned prior to training. The military rank of COT students is awarded based on the student's professional credentials in their respective fields. COT student ranks typically range from second lieutenant to lieutenant colonel. COT provides military training for about 1,300 officers annually.

Upon completion of the course, judge advocate and chaplain students normally attend career specialty schools offered at Maxwell AFB. Medical scholarship recipients report back to various medical schools located throughout the country, and most medical service officers report to their operational units throughout the world. Some medical officers will attend specialized training before reporting to their units. COT conducts training for Air Force active duty, National Guard and Reserve components.

### **OTS Campus**

Construction began in March 1998 on a \$75 million Officer Training School campus. Completion of the new OTS parade field and reviewing stand complex will complete construction. The current campus has two academic buildings with two auditoriums, four dormitories, a dining facility and fitness center. Adjacent to the campus are a running track, parade field, volleyball courts, and flickerball fields.

### **For More Information**

For more information on the Officer Training School, visit the OTS Web site at <http://www.afots.af.mil/OTS/index.asp>. If you are considering applying for OTS and are not active duty, contact your local Air Force OTS recruiter via the [Air Force Recruiting Home page](#). If you are currently active duty, contact the education office or Military Personnel Flight (MPF) on your base. You can receive more information about OTS and the application process via the [Air Force Recruiting Home page](#).

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